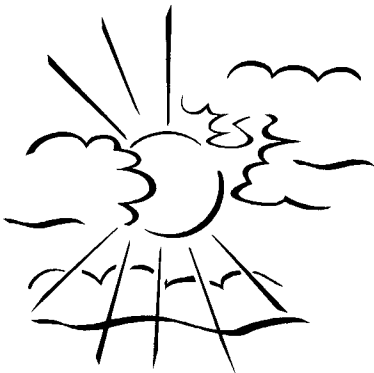


***Department  
of  
Human  
Services***

Prepared by the  
DHS Office of  
Communications  
(517) 373-7394



\*Important story at this spot

# **Articles in Today's Clips**

## **Monday, September 26, 2005**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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# Granholt, state's GOP leaders work to finish up budget

53  
1B ASSOCIATED PRESS 4/26

Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Republican legislative leaders are hoping to finish work on the state budget for the fiscal year that begins on Saturday.

Most of the state's roughly \$40 billion spending plan is on its way to the governor's desk for her signature, but members of the administration and lawmakers still have to hammer out their differences on the budget for the Michigan State Police.

The two sides are trying to find extra funding elsewhere in the budget to cover \$1.1 million needed to keep open state police posts in Grand Haven, Oakland County's Groveland Township and the Upper Peninsula's Iron River that Granholm had proposed closing earlier this year.

A spokesman for Granholm's budget office said late last week that the governor changed her position on the State Police posts and wants to keep them open.

The House voted to keep the posts open, the Senate voted to close them and lawmakers that represent those areas have strongly objected to their closing throughout the process.

A spokesman for Republican Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema of Wyoming said lawmakers and Granholm found a way to keep the posts open last week but the deal stalled for political reasons. But representatives for Republican lawmakers said an agreement is just about done.

"Let's just get this thing done," Ari Adler, a Sikkema spokesman, said.

# Column: Universal health care by another name: Medicaid

*Sunday, September 25, 2005*

*By Peter Luke*

## Medicaid: It's not just for the destitute anymore.

If the 2006 state budget awaiting Gov. Jennifer Granholm's signature proves anything, it is the bipartisan acceptance of Medicaid as an ever larger provider of health care to Michigan's lower-income workers and their children.

Medicaid's spending plan approved by lawmakers last week, funded with around \$7 billion in combined state and federal funds, assumes coverage for 1.5 million Michigan residents.

If the trends of the past hold true for 2006, more than 800,000 of those covered residents will be children, a 55-percent increase from 1999. To put that in perspective, there are about that many Michigan public school children, total, in kindergarten through sixth grade.

As the number of children on Medicaid has grown, so has the program's political constituency in the Legislature. The central fact of yet another cash-strapped state budget is that the delivery of health care as a government responsibility has bipartisan acceptance.

A study this year by the Senate Fiscal Agency looked at five years of Medicaid enrollment growth in each Michigan county. Conventional wisdom would have held that the most growth in caseloads occurred in counties beset by chronic urban poverty. Not so.

Caseload growth doubled from 1999 through 2004 in Allegan, Livingston and Ottawa counties, three of the most Republican counties in the state. Caseloads grew by two-thirds in Antrim, Hillsdale, St. Joseph and Kent counties during that time.

Overall, Medicaid caseloads are projected to rise next year even as payroll employment in Michigan stabilizes.

If that's surprising, it shouldn't be. More children are coming onto the Medicaid rolls now than earlier this decade, when the state was shedding the most jobs.

Budget analysts suspect that as their parents are forced to exchange higher-wage jobs with full health benefits for lower wage jobs, the bill for their children's health care is being picked up by the state.

Under Medicaid or MiChild, another state health care plan for minors, children in households with income up to \$38,000 -- a couple each earning \$9 an hour -- can qualify.

Rep. Alma Wheeler Smith, D-Salem Twp., this summer commissioned a study from the Department of Community Health that found that more than half of adults on Medicaid are employed. At one company, unnamed by the department, nearly a quarter of its 1,356-member work force was covered by Medicaid. While significant numbers of workers are covered by Medicaid, fewer employers are offering health care at all. A survey released this month by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation found that 60 percent of

businesses nationally provide health insurance to their employees, down from 69 percent five years ago.

Smith said Michigan's Medicaid caseload is growing "because businesses are shifting their responsibility to provide health care to the state. Employers are bailing."

Because of that, Smith said, Michigan's Medicaid caseload and its cost won't be retreating even if the state's job climate improves in the next year.

"Anecdotally, people have told us that employers are instructing their workers in how to enroll their children" in state funded health care, she said. "The exposure and risk for Medicaid is expanding because employers see a good opportunity to shift their costs. We're in line for a load of hurt."

Should that happen, the problem for the Legislature is this: No lawmakers in either party are eager to raise taxes to cover the growing costs, nor are they eager to limit eligibility.

Smith and other Democrats believe employers should reimburse the state for their employees' Medicaid-covered health bills. The irony for Democrats in employer-fueled Medicaid growth among the lower-middle class is that it helps lay the groundwork for what has long been a Democratic goal -- universal, single-payer health care. Medicare, in other words, for all.

Democrats, it seems, aren't the only ones open to the idea. In a survey of business executives and small business owners last month by the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, about 40 percent expressed support for government-funded health care.

According to the report commissioned by Smith, 170,000 workers were covered by Medicaid last fall. For their employers, government-funded health care is already here.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2005

## **30,000 Sign Up for MI-Rx Prescription Drug Card Governor Highlights One-Year Anniversary of Program**

LANSING – In her weekly radio address, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced that 30,000 uninsured seniors and people from working families have signed up for the MI-Rx prescription drug discount card since it became available one year ago. “The cost of prescriptions is such a huge burden on families in Michigan and across America, where consumers are spending more than \$200 billion a year on pharmaceuticals,” Granholm said. “With the costs rising further at an incredible 12 percent annually, the MI-Rx card is an important way to help our citizens afford the prescriptions they need.”

The MI-Rx prescription drug discount card has helped seniors and families across Michigan save hundreds of dollars a year by offering an average savings of 20 percent off everyday medications at the register. The service is free and the card can be used at more than 2,000 neighborhood pharmacies statewide.

Unlike discount programs in other states, MI-Rx isn't just for seniors. To qualify for the card, family members must only be Michigan residents, have no other prescription drug coverage, and have an income below the state's median income. This means an uninsured family of four that makes \$56,000 a year, or a single individual without health insurance who makes \$28,000 a year, only has to fill out a simple application to sign up. With health care costs increasing across the board, the MI-Rx card is one of many steps the Governor has taken to help Michigan's most vulnerable citizens. Granholm has fought against any effort by the Legislature to deny healthcare to the most vulnerable and has helped open 14 new federally qualified health centers in Michigan since 2003. Applications for the MI-Rx card are available at pharmacies and service counters throughout Michigan, or by calling 866-755-6479.

The Governor's weekly radio address is released each Friday at 10:00 a.m. and may be heard on broadcast stations across the state through an affiliation with the Michigan Association of Broadcasters. The address will also be available on the Governor's Website on Mondays as a podcast for general distribution to personal MP3 players and home computers.

**Broadcasters Note:** Governor Granholm's radio address can be accessed through Sunday evening exclusively through the Members Only page of the Michigan Association of Broadcasters website: [www.michmab.com](http://www.michmab.com).

# Granholm: 30,000 uninsured on state discount drug program

9/23/2005, 10:46 a.m. ET

**The Associated Press**

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — A state program that allows uninsured residents to get prescription drugs at a discount has signed up 30,000 senior citizens and working families in its first year, Gov. Jennifer Granholm said Friday during her weekly radio address.

The Democratic governor announced the Michigan Prescription Discount Card, called the MI-Rx Card, during her 2004 State of the State address. At that time, she said it could help up to 200,000 people without insurance cut the cost of their medication by up to 20 percent.

The service is free, and the card can be used at more than 2,000 pharmacies across the state. It was launched one year ago this week.

The program is open to senior citizens and working families who don't have insurance and earn less than the state's median income: \$56,000 a year for a family of four or \$28,000 for an individual.

Applications are available at pharmacies or by calling the program toll-free at (866) 755-6479.

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On the Net:

Published September 24, 2005

[ From the Lansing State Journal ]

## **30,000 sign up for MI-Rx Card**

Gov. Jennifer Granholm said Friday that 30,000 senior citizens and working families signed up for the Michigan Prescription Discount Card in its first year.

The free MI-Rx Card could help up to 200,000 people without insurance cut the cost of their medication by up to 20 percent, she said.

For applications, call (866) 755-6479.

Michigan Report

September 25, 2005

## **GOVERNOR TOUTS USAGE OF PRESCRIPTION DISCOUNT CARD**

Governor Jennifer Granholm said in her weekly radio address that 30,000 residents who lacked prescription drug coverage have signed up for a state-run discount card since it launched a year ago.

Ms. Granholm said the MI-Rx card has saved residents hundreds of dollars a year with an average savings of 20 percent. Those eligible for the card must have no other prescription drug coverage and an income below the state's media income level – \$56,000 for a family of four or \$28,000 for a single person.

In her address, Ms. Granholm also discussed her administration's efforts to address the issue of affordable health care.



Published September 25, 2005

## State expands dental care for Medicaid

Michigan cut coverage in 2003; about 500,000 adults expected to benefit

By Chris Andrews  
Lansing State Journal

Arlet Grinnell of Lansing is looking forward to regular dental visits for the first time in two years.

Grinnell, 53, has had to rely on University of Michigan dental students to treat major teeth problems since October 2003. That's when the state discontinued dental coverage for adults on Medicaid as a cost-cutting move.

Medicaid - a joint state-federal health-care program mostly for poor people and those with disabilities - currently covers only dental emergencies and extractions.

"If you have an abscessed tooth, they will pull it out, but that's all they do," said Grinnell, who has diabetes and high blood pressure. "If it could be saved, you might as well wait till it couldn't be filled and have them yank it."

Michigan will restore coverage for about 500,000 adults on Medicaid beginning Oct. 1, under a budget bill headed to Gov. Jennifer Granholm for her signature.

Lawmakers are putting the finishing touches on the 2005-06 budget, which covers the spending year that begins Oct. 1. Granholm is expected to sign the bills. The new budget includes \$8 billion in spending for Medicaid, up about 4.5 percent.

They partially restored money for vision and hearing screening for schoolchildren, which Granholm proposed eliminating. They backed off earlier proposals to eliminate eligibility for 19- and 20-year-olds and for relatives other than parents who raise children on Medicaid. They are creating copayments for Medicaid patients who see doctors, go to emergency rooms or are hospitalized.

"It is better overall than anyone dreamed it would be," said Janice Hudson, research specialist for the Michigan League for Human Services.

The new budget includes \$4.8 million in general fund money for the dental services, thanks largely to a push by state Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland. Additional federal money will be available.

State Rep. Bruce Caswell, who chairs the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Community Health, said the investment will end up saving the state money.

People who avoid getting problems with wisdom teeth treated, for instance, can end up in the emergency room with more serious problems, he said.

"It just seems as though we were spending a lot of money in areas where if we had spent it up front, we would have prevented health issues down the road," said Caswell, R-Hillsdale.

It remains to be seen how many dentists will accept Medicaid patients. Many don't, saying the reimbursement rates are inadequate.

Kris Nicholoff, assistant executive director of the Michigan Dental Association, is hopeful. "This will get people treatment," Nicholoff said. "It will get people back into the clinics."

### **Medicaid highlights**

Here are highlights of the state's proposed 2005-06 Medicaid budget:

- Adult dental services will be restored.
- Money for vision and hearing screening for schoolchildren will be partially restored.
- Copayments will be added for a physician visit (\$2), for hospital emergency room treatment (\$3) and for the first day of an inpatient hospital stay (\$50).

Contact Chris Andrews at 377-1054 or [candrews@lsj.com](mailto:candrews@lsj.com).

Michigan Report

September 25, 2005

## **GRANHOLM: HOUSE REPUBLICANS STAND IN WAY OF JOBS**

House Republicans are “holding up job creation in Michigan,” an angry Governor Jennifer Granholm told reporters on Friday, and she threw down the glove challenging the chamber to pass a major portion of her jobs program in the next week.

If it doesn’t, Ms. Granholm said she will go across the state to tell the public that Republicans care more about legislation on the state’s potato commission than on building jobs. It’s time, she said, for House members to “get off their duff” and act.

At a Thursday meeting with House Speaker Craig DeRoche (R-Novi), Ms. Granholm said she asked him to move the bill next week, and she said Mr. DeRoche said he was willing to move “a bill.” Ms. Granholm said she is holding him to acting.

A House Republican spokesperson said Ms. Granholm’s criticism and challenge were in part a reaction to a recent poll showing her job approval rating slip below 50 percent.

But asked if she thought Republicans were stalling action in part to build up the candidacy of GOP gubernatorial candidate Dick DeVos, she said, “Yes, I do.”

Republicans are focusing more on criticizing her and trying to build up their party than build up the state, she said.

Ms. Granholm said the Republican-controlled Senate had passed part of the jobs package – that would allow for securitization of the state’s tobacco settlement funds to finance new developments in high tech industry – months ago and the House had not acted in response.

The proposal was part of her package that included a change in the state’s business taxes. Ms. Granholm had called initially for a bonding proposal that would allow the state to invest in new high tech corporations.

The Senate trimmed that proposal when it passed its measure in June and took out a provision for direct investment in corporations. The House in response prepared HB 5048, which would securitize part of the state’s tobacco settlement revenues, but that bill remains on the House floor.

Not only would a securitization or bonding proposal help develop jobs in the state, the 2005-06 budget agreement anticipates \$33 million in revenue from the securitization so action is needed on two fronts, Ms. Granholm said.

Speaking as state Republicans were beginning to gather on Mackinac Island for their biennial party conference, Ms. Granholm said when the party “finished their fancy party” they needed to complete action on the legislation.

House Speaker Craig DeRoche (R-Novi) said he was surprised by the governor’s attack given the work done at a meeting Monday and the promise to return to the table on Tuesday when Ms. Granholm was on Mackinac Island.

Mr. DeRoche said the House agrees action is needed on business and a jobs proposal, but said the governor’s original plans had no political viability. The House will pass the tobacco securitization proposal, he added, when the Senate deals with the business tax plan it has already passed.

The governor opposes the plan, which provides a credit for personal property taxes, cuts the rate and retains the ultimate elimination of the tax by 2010.

While criticizing House Republicans, Ms. Granholm praised the Senate and Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) for acting on the securitization/bonding part of the proposal.

She also acknowledged that some action was delayed because of work on the 2005-06 budget, but the budget agreement has been reached, she said. Moreover, she said repeatedly, it has been nearly eight months since she first laid out the proposal in her 2005 State of the State address.

State officials face a deadline, she said, and it is the deadline that unemployed workers face when their bills are due and they have to consider leaving the state to seek out work.

“They need to exercise leadership,” she said. And “if they do not, I will go to every corner of this state and force them to explain” why they have not acted.

Asked if the tax cut proposal the House passed in August couldn’t be considered part of its plan to boost jobs, Ms. Granholm said the tax cut was “utterly irresponsible” and would blow a hole in the 2005-06 budget.

A poll released Thursday by the Lansing firm of EPIC/MRA did show Ms. Granholm’s job approval had slipped below 50 percent, but her spokesperson said at the time that the governor was more focused on bringing jobs to the state than on polls.

Lansing State Journal

September 24, 2005

## **Granholt, GOP spar over jobs proposals**

### **Gov. blames Republicans for slow pace of progress**

By Tim Martin  
Associated Press

Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm on Friday criticized Republicans, particularly those in the state House, for not acting on her proposals that she says would improve Michigan's economy. Republicans countered that Granholm is trying to lay blame elsewhere for Michigan's struggling economy, which has had one of the nation's highest unemployment rates for months.

Granholm laid out many of her job creation proposals during her State of the State address in February, but they have not been taken up by the House and Senate, which are controlled by Republicans. Both sides, however, have been trying to reach a compromise for months.

"It is not acceptable," Granholm said. "Michigan is in the eye of an economic storm. We're not watching it come at us from a distance, like Rita. This storm has made landfall."

The governor made her comments in Lansing as state Republicans headed to Mackinac Island for a weekend leadership conference.

"I guess I'm a little perplexed at the timing of her remarks," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, who met with the governor and House Speaker Craig De- Roche, R-Novl on Thursday.

"I think we made a lot of progress yesterday on both the tax and the diversification package."

# **Jobless rate not accurate**

FLINT JOURNAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Sunday, September 25, 2005

JOURNAL READER

A recent article stated that the state's jobless rate has declined, but I cannot believe the people who keep saying unemployment has gone down. They are not talking about the people who have run out of unemployment benefits. There are so many people who have run out and are getting nothing. These people are not going out and getting jobs, because there are no jobs that can support a family. It's time for Lansing government to take a look and state the true facts.

Janet K. White  
Flint

## **Jury convicts dad of murdering daughter, 3**

*September 24, 2005*

**BY JOHN MASSON**

**FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER**

It took a Macomb County jury less than 45 minutes to convict a Warren man of first-degree murder Friday for drowning his 3-year-old daughter in a laundry tub.

Daniel A. Wells, 39, admitted to taking Julia Wells from her crib Aug. 15, 2004, and holding her head under water for two or three minutes, until the bubbles stopped. Wells testified that his daughter died without a struggle. Her only action was to stroke one of his arms as he held her face underwater.

Wells testified Thursday that he suspected his daughter was being sexually abused because he noticed changes in her behavior and redness and swelling of her genitals. But he never reported his suspicions to authorities, or to his estranged wife Nora Wells.

He said that when he put Julia to bed the night before he killed her, he intended to kill himself because he could not bear the thought of his daughter being abused. But the next morning, after at least six hours of drinking heavily and consuming whatever drugs he could find in his medicine cabinet, he decided instead he would kill Julia, then himself.

Former Macomb County Medical Examiner Dr. Werner Spitz testified Thursday that an autopsy revealed no signs of injury to the child's genitals. Spitz also told jurors that drowning is a violent, terrifying death -- one inconsistent with Wells' description of his daughter gently stroking his arm as she passed away.

Julia's grandmother, Rose AbuLibdeh, was with the child's mother, Nora Wells, when they found Daniel Wells hanging nearly lifeless from a cable as they arrived to pick Julia up. Nora cut Daniel down before she found Julia's lifeless body and the obscene and abusive messages he had left around the home, some of them scrawled on the walls.

One of the messages Wells testified he wrote said, "She did not suffer, Nora. I did."

Wells spent more than a day in a coma after his suicide attempt, but was coherent enough by Aug. 18, 2004, to give a statement to police. Therese Tobin, chief trial attorney for the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office, said that statement seems to have helped the jury of nine men and three women make its decision.

"I think we were given some good solid evidence to present," Tobin said. "I think the confession the detective got was very helpful in proving premeditation, and I think the notes the defendant left were indicative of his state of mind."

Wells' attorney, Ronald Goldstein, acknowledged that "this was a tough, tough case to try." Wells will receive life in prison without possibility of parole when he is sentenced by Judge Donald Miller on Nov. 2.

Contact JOHN MASSON at 586-469-4904 or [masson@freepress.com](mailto:masson@freepress.com).

# **Baby's death `suspicious,' police say**

Sunday, September 25, 2005

Kalamazoo Gazette Staff Reports

Police are investigating the ``suspicious" death of a 20-month-old boy, authorities said Saturday. The baby died Friday night at Bronson Methodist Hospital, according to the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. Officers said he was taken to the hospital from Hilltop Apartments, 3060 S. Burdick, on Wednesday afternoon.

Officers said the Criminal Investigation Division is handling the case. Police expect preliminary autopsy results this week.



# Article was unfair to parents

FLINT JOURNAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Sunday, September 25, 2005

JOURNAL READER

I am sickened and appalled at the article regarding the Vamos' child, Jamie ["Questions swirl after toddler's drowning," Sept. 19, Page A1]. As a close family friend, I know that the Vamoses are decent and loving parents! They are dealing with a horrible accident, and this article is surely not a way to help the grieving process.

The article only put a sense of suspicion in those who do not know the family and a sense of great disgust in those who do know the family.

This horrible tragedy occurred Sept. 1, so why is the article just now coming out? I believe that an apology is in order for the family. This has only caused more hurt.

Anyone responsible for publishing this article should be ashamed!

Kimberly Grice  
Montrose

# Letters to the Editor

*Lansing State Journal*

*September 24, 2005*

## Back soldier bill

I urge all legislators and Gov. Jennifer Granholm to support House Bill 5100, sponsored by Rep. Rick Jones, R-Grand Ledge.

Jones' legislation protects the parental rights of men and woman who are serving in the National Guard or Reserves when they are deployed to such places as Iraq, Afghanistan or anywhere else in the world in service to the U.S.

No soldier should lose custody of their children when they are thousands of miles away from home, placing their lives in jeopardy to protect the freedoms we enjoy or our national interests.

Melvin M. Villarreal

Lansing



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

MARIANNE UDOW  
DIRECTOR

## News Release

**Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or  
Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394**

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### **Michigan Department of Human Services Summarily Suspends the Group Day Care Home License of Doreen Kenny**

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**September 26, 2005**

The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Children and Adult Licensing issued an order of summary suspension and notice of intent to revoke the license of Isabella County group day care home provider Doreen Kenny, 3087 East South County Line Road, Shepherd, Michigan. This action resulted from a recent investigation of a complaint of the child day care group home.

The September 22, 2005 complaint investigation found violations of the Child Care Organizations Act and/or day care family home promulgated rules requiring "emergency action" under the Michigan Administrative Procedures Act, MCL 24.292(2).

Effective 6:00 p.m., September 23, 2005, the Summary Suspension Order prohibits Doreen Kenny from operating a group day care home at 3087 East South County Line Road, Shepherd, Michigan, or at any other address or location. Accordingly, she may not accept children for care after that date and time. The order also requires Ms. Kenny to inform all of the parents of children in her care that her license has been suspended and that she can no longer provide day care.

Ms. Kenny has held a license to operate a group day care home since April 28, 2005. The license was for 12 children.

Michigan law defines a group day care home as a private home in which more than six but not more than 12 minor children are given care and supervision for periods of less than 24 hours a day, unattended by a parent or legal guardian, except children related to an adult member of the family by blood, marriage, or adoption. Group day care home includes a home that gives care to an unrelated minor child for more than four weeks during a calendar year.

For more information, consult DHS website at [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs).

# Troy wrestles with capacity issues of day care in homes

■ The council considers amendment to the rule on the number of kids, but awaits state action.

By SHAWN D. LEWIS  
*The Detroit News*

9/25

**TROY** — Sharon Schafer insists she is no troublemaker.

She wants to continue caring for kids in her home as she has done for the past 15 years. Problem is, there are too many kids in that house — nine. The existing Troy ordinance permits up to six children in a family home day

care. Group day care homes, which serve between seven and 12 children, are illegal. But Schafer and others have been illegally operating group day care centers in their homes for years without much attention from the city.

"Given today's economy, with so many two-income families under stress, our services are needed," said Schafer. "My first job is to take care of the kids, and then to help the working mothers and fathers."

But according to city attorney Lori Bluhm, the planning commission is trying to reach a resolution.

The commission will hold a meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at City Hall, 500 W. Big Beaver. The meeting will include time for public comment.

Schafer says she'll be there to offer her suggestions.

"I'm the reason for this entire debate," she said. "A neighbor mentioned that I was caring for children in my home when they called the city about a sidewalk issue. Then some people from the city came to my home and issued a citation saying they were concerned about noise and traffic."

Schafer said when the city rep-

resentatives came to her house, they asked how many children were inside.

"I told them nine, but they told me the city ordinance only allows six," she said.

By Schaefer's count, there are between 18 and 22 group homes and about 45 family day care centers in Troy.

She decided to find out if there were any complaints against other group day care centers.

"I went to the police station with a list of all the addresses of these homes and asked if there were any complaints against

them," she said.

"Other than my home, there was only one other complaint — about a barking dog."

Schafer was not fined. Meanwhile the planning commission has been holding public hearings about the matter.

"The commission held a public hearing Aug. 9, and it was packed," said Schafer. "I spoke at that hearing, too. But they voted to table the matter."

The city is waiting to see how the state handles House Bill 4398, which would create a new act and repeal the current zoning laws.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2005

## **Governor Granholm Calls for Extradition of Florida Man for Unpaid Child Support**

LANSING – Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced that she has initiated proceedings to extradite a Florida man charged with failing to pay more than \$60,000 in child support, a felony crime punishable by four years in prison.

Phillip Wendell Chenevert was arrested by law enforcement officers in Dade County, Florida. In June 1998, Mr. Chenevert was ordered by the Wayne County Circuit Court in Michigan to pay \$119.29 per week for the support of his minor child, but has failed to comply. As of July 2005, his unpaid child support obligations totaled \$61,753.83.

“Mr. Chenevert has failed to meet his responsibility to support his child, and that has consequences,” Granholm said. “The state of Michigan will use all tools at its disposal to ensure that parents provide for their children.”

Upon return to Michigan, Mr. Chenevert will face prosecution. In Michigan, non-support of a child is a felony punishable by up to four years in prison and/or a \$2,000 fine. Since taking office, Governor Granholm has requested the return, through the extradition process, of more than 100 parents who have failed to support their children as ordered by courts in Michigan.

Under the Uniform Criminal Extradition Act, the power to demand extradition of a fugitive who has fled from justice in Michigan and taken refuge in another state is vested in the governor. After receiving extradition documents, Florida officials can issue a warrant delivering the fugitive into the custody of Michigan authorities.

To encourage parents to pay their past due child support, the state is offering an amnesty period beginning October 1, 2005. Under the new law, parents who owe past due child support in Michigan will have a 90-day window to avoid state criminal and civil enforcement penalties. Penalties that have already been initiated will be waived with the exception of felony prosecutions or in circumstances where a delinquent parent has already been arrested due to failure or refusal to pay past due child support.

The amnesty program does not affect current support obligations. The amnesty program was established by Public Act 584 of 2004 and sponsored by Rep. Alexander Lipsey.

For more information regarding the amnesty program, parents can contact their local Friend of the Court office, call 1-866-540-0008, or visit [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs) and click on “Child Support.”

# State House Dems want preschool available to all 4-year-olds

9/24/2005, 10:00 a.m. ET

By AMY F. BAILEY

*The Associated Press*

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Preschool would be available to all 4-year-olds in Michigan by 2010 under legislation being developed by Democrats in the state House.

They want to gradually expand the Michigan School Readiness Program to children from middle-class families who do not earn enough to afford a high-priced preschool but make more than allowed to be eligible for the current federal and state programs.

The expansion is intended to make children better prepared for school, not only academically, but also socially and emotionally. A number of scientific studies have shown that key brain development takes place before children enter kindergarten, which often is at 5.

"Preschool paves the way to a lifetime of learning and achievement," Rep. Pam Byrnes said in a statement obtained Saturday by The Associated Press.

Byrnes, a Chelsea Democrat, will sponsor the main bill in the package of legislation expected to be introduced in the coming weeks. She will be among a handful of Democrats who are scheduled to officially announce the proposal at a series of news conferences on Monday in Whitmore Lake, Flint, Hazel Park, Port Huron, Mount Clemens and Lansing.

Nearly 60,000 Michigan children are not in private preschool and do not qualify for the federal Head Start program or the state's school readiness program, said Steve Manchester, of the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children.

The federal Head Start program is for children who are from families at or below the poverty line, which is \$19,350 for a family of four. The state school readiness program is for children whose poor families earn slightly more than the poverty line and those considered at-risk.

The programs have about 61,000 enrollees combined, Manchester said.

House Democrats also want to increase the number of teachers that will be needed to nearly double the state's preschool population by providing scholarships so teachers are trained in early childhood education.

The other bill in the package would require licensed daycare facilities to receive a quality rating to be publicly available to parents.

Despite strong support for the proposal among a number of education advocacy groups, House Democrats will have to work hard for the proposal because of its high price tag.

It would cost \$85 million to increase preschool enrollment from about 25,000 to 50,000 in the first year, according to projections by House Democrats. The annual cost will jump to \$400 million in its fifth year, the caucus said.

House Democrats have not identified a funding source for the preschool expansion, but spokesman Dan Farough said the caucus would fight for needed dollars during budget negotiations for the fiscal

year that begins Oct. 1, 2006.

Matt Resch, spokesman for Republican House Speaker Craig DeRoche of Novi, said that while it is important to educate children at an early age, the expansion proposed by Democrats is too expensive.

The governor and state lawmakers have struggled to balance the state budget in recent years as tax revenues have hit record lows.

"A lot of public schools have gone to more comprehensive preschool programs," Resch said. "A mandate of this size is going to be hugely expensive for the state and taxpayers."

Supporters of the legislation, however, emphasize that the high cost will save money down the road. They say that for every \$1 invested in quality early childhood education, the state could save \$17 for reduced future costs for special education, welfare payments and crime.

A handful of states currently provide preschool to 4-year-olds to varying degrees.

Georgia and Oklahoma provide preschool to all 4-year-olds, but others in New Jersey and New York are limited to children in poor school districts or those who are from poor families, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research.

W. Steven Barnett, the institute's director, said the expansion of preschool across the country is partly due to the No Child Left Behind Act, which requires annual testing starting in the third grade.

"Schools are looking at what they have to accomplish," he said. "They're saying 'If students get to us 18 months behind, we're not going to be able to catch up.'"

Martha Navarro, director of early childhood education for the Port Huron Area School District, said kindergarten teachers know right away which students have been to preschool.

"They are the students who have the social and emotional confidence to succeed," Navarro said.

"We're starting to recognize how important social and emotional development is to students. Learning doesn't occur when there are barriers to a child's emotional development."

Letters for September 26

The Grand Rapids Press

## **Invest in children**

The editorial "Crafting a New Lesson Plan" (Press, Sept. 17), states that money spent for Young Fives and kindergarten is providing "full time pay for half time work." The financial support of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs are moneys well spent.

The elementary schools should get twice the money per student as the rest of the education system, including college.

One would not build a million-dollar house on a \$100 foundation. If people consider their importance, elementary school programs have never been adequately funded.

Comparing education to business is not a good proposition. If schooling were a business, a school board would have a team of medical personnel, educators, etc. to examine the raw material (children) and then explain to the producers (parents) of this raw material whether or not they were acceptable. It might be a good idea to have a bodyguard around when some parents are told that their children are inferior and could not be educated to the point of becoming useful citizens.

Once a child was deemed acceptable for the classroom, teachers would be able to use whatever means necessary to keep the line moving along. Inspectors would measure productivity to determine if the product was acceptable or whether it should be thrown into the scrap pile. A recall could fix faulty graduates with serious problems.

Education is not a business and the elementary programs are wise investments.

If people are concerned about wasted money, attack the legislators who put a specified amount per student in the budget but take it away from K-12 as the year progresses. They legislate part-time and money-grub full-time in an attempt to get re-elected. Education does not appear to be high on their list of priorities.

LEO MISNER/Belmont



# State's congressional delegation split over Head Start program

9/26/55  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Michigan's congressional delegation split along party lines last week over legislation that would allow the nation's Head Start centers consider religion when hiring workers.

House Republicans helped approve a bill that lets churches and other faith-based preschool centers receive federal tax dollars even if they hire only people who share their religion.

The Head Start program offers comprehensive education to more than 900,000 poor children.

Democrats said the consideration of religion in hiring practices was discriminatory. Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick, D-Detroit, called it a "poison pill."

"Permitting faith-based organizations to use federal dollars to discriminate in hiring is a step backwards in the continuing struggle for civil rights, a step I am not willing to support," Kilpatrick said.

Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Holland, said the bill would strength-

*"They should not be required to compromise their religious identity as a condition of participating in a public program that assists people in need."*



Rep. Pete Hoekstra,  
R-Holland

en teacher quality while protecting taxpayers against mismanagement. Addressing the faith-based provision, he said it would allow those organizations to compete for federal grants.

"They should not be required to compromise their religious identity as a condition of participating in a public program that assists

people in need," Hoekstra said.

In other action, Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Menominee, introduced legislation to target price gouging in energy emergencies. His bill would allow the president to declare a national energy emergency and make it illegal for the sale of crude oil, gasoline or petroleum to skyrocket.

It would also let the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department prosecute oil companies and gas stations that engage in price gouging.

"Our constituents are angry and frustrated with these high gas prices — and they deserve answers and actions from their elected officials," Stupak said.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow, meanwhile, called upon the FTC to investigate gas price hikes following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

In a letter to the chairwoman of the FTC, Stabenow said the nation's consumers "need assurance that they are not being preyed upon by unfair and potentially illegal pricing."

# Flint mulls using grant funds to buy houses for evacuees

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Monday, September 26, 2005

By Christofer Machniak [cmachniak@flintjournal.com](mailto:cmachniak@flintjournal.com) • 810.766.6304

FLINT - City officials are mulling a plan to use \$1.4 million in federal block grant dollars to buy houses in Flint and resell them at a reduced price to low-income families and Hurricane Katrina evacuees relocated to Genesee County. **QUICK TAKE**

Joe Conroy, an aide to Mayor Don Williamson, said many details are being worked out, but the city would buy 20 to 30 houses before the end of next month by working with area real estate agents. He said a formal proposal could be before the City Council for its meeting today.

"It'll be a good influence on neighborhoods and the families who are able to take advantage of it," Conroy said.

Speed in acquiring the homes is necessary, with the city facing an Oct. 31 deadline to spend the funds or lose them. The federal government requires that the money, designated for affordable housing, must be spent within five years.

It's unclear what the city originally wanted to spend the money for, but facing such deadlines is not new. The city has had trouble spending throughout its entire block grant program, especially over the past year, as Williamson withheld funds from nonprofit agencies during a review, and a political war with the council made decisions to reallocate unspent money difficult.

So with little time to spare, city officials hope to take advantage of a rule change for Katrina evacuees that reduces the required public comment period on plans to help victims from 30 days to three days. Conroy said he is in discussion with federal officials to extend the change for the entire proposal. He added the city would move ahead with separate plans if necessary.

But the idea faces serious questions from some council members, who reacted negatively when Conroy briefed them on the plan during a meeting last week.

Some wondered if the money can be spent in time, while others speculated the mayor is trying to make the council look bad in an election year with an irresponsible proposal that members likely would have to reject.

"We're going to become a landlord or we're going to become a real estate broker - I don't know how we can do that," said 9th Ward Councilman Scott Kincaid. "This is a real skeptical process that really hasn't been developed or well thought out. The administration is grasping for ways to spend this money so that they don't lose it."

Council Vice President Carolyn Sims said with many unanswered questions, she's against the idea and is concerned the city is opting to help outsiders before its own poverty-stricken residents.

"The whole nation is supporting and taking care of Katrina, but who's taking care of the homeless, displaced people in the city of Flint?" she said.

But 1st Ward Councilman Darryl E. Buchanan, Williamson's strongest council ally, said everyone can benefit from such a plan.

"Sometimes situations like this allow you to break down red tape and help people across the board," Buchanan said. "Charity does start at home, but sometimes we can take care of both in a situation like this."



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

MARIANNE UDOW  
DIRECTOR

## News Release

Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

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### **Department of Human Services' Workers Leave for Alabama Will Help Hurricane Survivors Obtain Vital Food Assistance**

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**September 23, 2005**

JACKSON – Judy Bell, Mary Hamilton and Karla Smith, all of Jackson, Michigan were among 25 workers from the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) who departed for Alabama Thursday to assist colleagues in the Alabama Department of Human Resources in serving survivors of Hurricane Katrina, DHS director Marianne Udow announced today.

"In the days since Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of our DHS workers have asked for the opportunity to serve the victims of the hurricane," Udow said. "I was very moved – though not surprised – by this response. During my tenure with DHS, I've learned that 'above and beyond the call of duty' is an everyday occurrence in this department."

Bell is an eligibility specialist who has been with DHS for 25 years. Hamilton is a family independence specialist who has been DHS for 17 years. Smith is a family independence specialist who has been with DHS for 27 years. All three workers are based in the DHS Jackson County office. After a training session Thursday, they will work near Mobile, Alabama from Friday, September 23, through Tuesday, September 27.

The 25 are part of a group of 51 workers from four states – Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio, and Maryland - traveling to Alabama to assist with the disaster food stamp program. The request for workers on loan came through Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), a mutual aid agreement and partnership that provides a way for states to send trained personnel to help with disaster relief efforts in other states.

"As we thank these workers for stepping forward, I also want to salute the DHS leaders and workers who have been on the job night and day since the hurricane, resettling evacuees who have come to Michigan through the efforts of the FEMA, or on their own to be near family," said Udow. "Hour by hour, these workers have comforted evacuees as they helped them establish themselves in apartments, in schools, and in communities – and formed real bonds with them in the process."

Latest numbers from around the state put the number of Hurricane Katrina evacuees in Michigan at over 2,500. Of those, more than 1,000 have sought help from DHS. Just over 300 came to Michigan through FEMA; most of these have been resettled around the state in housing offered by citizens and businesses, many at no cost. The state's list of housing offers now tops 15,000.

For more information go to [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs)

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# **Former school now serves as evacuees' supply site**

## **Goods assembled for Katrina victims by Salvation Army**

Monday, September 26, 2005

From Ann Arbor News staff reports

The school was teeming with activity Sept. 15, when the Washtenaw County Salvation Army and a crew of volunteers prepared the former school to become a county-wide distribution center for household supplies that will be available for families displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Major Rick Carroll, coordinator for the county's Salvation Army, gave instructions to a group of United Way "Day of Caring" volunteers before they scattered to unload tables and prepare the building for long-term use. Some 60 families are already in Washtenaw County. Carroll said his agency is preparing for as many as 200 families. They will need items such as sheets, towels, dishes and other furnishings to set up housekeeping, he said.

Carroll also said the Salvation Army is thankful for the use of the school which he praised as spacious and centrally located.

"We expect this place to be bustling with activity," Carroll said. "The families have come here with nothing, and they will be able to walk through here and select what they will need."

James Hawkins, interim superintendent of Ypsilanti Public Schools, said the decision to re-open Ardis was the right choice.

"We were approached by the Salvation Army and we brought our team together to formulate a plan," Hawkins said. "We felt it was important for the school to play a role in responding to the needs of the evacuees."

Hawkins said members of the Ypsilanti Support Services Association agreed to provide their services at no charge to open the building and prepare it for extended use. He said the only cost to the Salvation Army will be primarily for utilities.

# Local Katrina 'victim' may be case of fraud

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Monday, September 26, 2005

By Robert Snell [rsnell@flintjournal.com](mailto:rsnell@flintjournal.com) • 810.766.6302

FLINT - Police are investigating a fraud case involving a woman who received more than \$1,500 after posing as a Hurricane Katrina victim.

The woman, whose name, age and hometown have not been released, received \$1,565 earlier this month from the American Red Cross Genesee-Lapeer Chapter.

She told Red Cross workers she came to Flint after the hurricane destroyed her neighborhood in the Gulf Coast region, said Ken Vavra, executive director of the local Red Cross.

Red Cross workers now doubt her story and notified Flint police last week after learning she has been living and working for the past year in Flint.

There have been no arrests, and the case remains open.

If the woman is arrested, it would be at least the second case in Michigan involving someone posing as a victim of Hurricane Katrina, which killed more than 1,000 people, flooded New Orleans and inflicted heavy damage on parts of Mississippi and Alabama.

A Mason woman was arrested last week and charged with a felony for receiving aid after police said she lied about being a hurricane victim, according to the Lansing State Journal. She faces up to 5 years in prison if convicted.

"We are not the only chapter around the country having issues or problems," Vavra said, adding that "fraud alert" posters will be displayed in the office today listing acts that constitute fraud.

Nationwide, people have been charged in suburban Atlanta, South Dakota, and Mississippi.

Fraud takes money from people who genuinely need help and betrays public trust and generosity, Vavra said.

Nationwide, Americans have donated more than \$1.2 billion to help Katrina victims, according to The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

The local Red Cross chapter has raised more than \$350,000 in direct hurricane relief donations, Vavra said. It has spent \$99,000 helping more than 143 people.

"We were a little surprised," by the amount of need, Vavra said. "It's mostly families staying here with relatives or friends."

The local case started Sept. 14, when a woman approached the Red Cross and asked for hurricane relief, according to police records.

The woman claimed she was from a neighborhood devastated by the hurricane, said Vavra, who could not identify her hometown Sunday.

She provided identification that showed her address. Red Cross workers referenced a database that showed the address was in a hard-hit area along the Gulf Coast.

The woman received \$1,565, police records show.

But an anonymous caller later contacted the Red Cross and told them to look into the woman's story.

A Red Cross official contacted the woman's social worker, and officials learned she had been living and working in the Flint area for a year, Vavra said.

A philanthropy expert said such cases are rare and have little impact on overall charitable giving. "I don't think it will be that detrimental," said Sondra Shaw-Hardy, co-founder of the Indiana-based Women's Philanthropy Institute. "I feel sorry for the people who gave her money. That's a real shame."

**Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (MDVPTB) recognizes Governor-proclaimed Domestic Violence Awareness Month and teams up with the Verizon Wireless HopeLine project.**

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). Throughout the United States, this month is set aside to recognize those who are surviving or have survived violence in their intimate relationships and to remember those who were murdered by their batterers.

MDVPTB is uniting with Verizon Wireless' HopeLine project as one way of recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the Grand Tower. HopeLine collects any wireless phones and accessories from all wireless companies and refurbishes or recycles them in an environmentally-friendly way. Using the funds generated by this project, Verizon Wireless donates cell phones and airtime to victims of domestic violence. Additionally, this project provides funding and other contributions to domestic violence shelters and prevention programs.

**During October, MDVPTB will place a collection box in the Grand Tower lobby. Please bring in any personal cell phones and accessories you are no longer using and donate them in support of the important cause of helping eliminate domestic violence in Michigan.**

To learn more about domestic violence, check out the brochures and other information that will also be available in the lobby or visit the following Web sites:

- ◆ The Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board – [www.michigan.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.michigan.gov/domesticviolence)
- ◆ The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence – [www.mcadsv.org/mrcdsv](http://www.mcadsv.org/mrcdsv)
- ◆ The Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence – [www.mcadsv.org](http://www.mcadsv.org)

If you or a friend need help, please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-7233 (SAFE), TDD (800)787-3224 or click here to locate the domestic violence agency in your area, [http://www.michigan.gov/emi/1,1303,7-102-112\\_219\\_240-2884--CI,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/emi/1,1303,7-102-112_219_240-2884--CI,00.html).

# Volunteers sought to prepare tax returns

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

GENESEE COUNTY

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Monday, September 26, 2005

By Melissa Burden [mburden@flintjournal.com](mailto:mburden@flintjournal.com) • 810.766.6316

GENESEE COUNTY

**Volunteers are needed**

this upcoming tax season to help prepare income tax returns for area seniors and low- to moderate-income residents.

Volunteers usually work four to eight hours a week from Feb. 1 through April 15 as part of AARP's Tax-Aide program, said Walker Fesmire, a Tax-Aide district coordinator.

This past tax season, 62 volunteers prepared free city, state and federal returns and property tax and home heating credits for about 3,500 people at 30 Genesee County area sites, Fesmire said.

Those with tax knowledge and computer skills are encouraged to volunteer, but skills are not necessary. Volunteers are trained, he said.

Details: (810) 659-9815 or [wfesmire@umflint.edu](mailto:wfesmire@umflint.edu).

Melissa Burden



# IN AMERICA: Impressive talk yields only weak action

**E**ven now, when the president is saying all the right things about the problems of poverty highlighted by the plight of the Katrina victims, his administration is dragging its feet on practical steps to help meet their needs.

Medical care for the evacuees from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama is urgently required. As Dr. Mark McClellan, the top federal health official in the Department of Health and Human Services, said, "The best and fastest way to provide help to evacuees is to support the state programs in place and support the local health care providers already in place."

The way to do that, he said, is to make the evacuees eligible for Medicaid for the next few months, so they will know that their hospital and doctor and medication bills will be paid.

The governors, through their national association, agreed, and a measure to make all the evacuees Medicaid-eligible for the next five months —

with an option for the president to extend the time — is pending before the Senate in a bill sponsored by the top leaders of both parties. ...

But now it appears the Bush administration, rather than backing this simple and effective measure, is insisting on a slower, more cumbersome approach, requiring each state to negotiate its own waiver from the rules limiting eligibility for Medicaid.

**David S. Broder, *Washington Post***

**PRESIDENT BUSH RECENTLY** ticked off a host of big ideas for ending poverty, but he must now walk the talk. ... The sun had barely risen the next day before it became clear just how little action we could expect.

Bush refused to discuss rolling back the tax cuts he shoved through Congress for the nation's most wealthy. Instead, he told lawmakers to find spending cuts in social programs ... a fanciful goal that even House Majority Leader Tom DeLay

suggested would be hard to achieve.

**Kai Wright, editor of *BlackAIDS.org*, writing for *Progressive Media Project***

**(FORMER VICE PRESIDENTIAL candidate)** John Edwards was right in saying at the Center for American Progress that Katrina not only exposed America's dirty secret but presented a "historic moment" when it is clear the country is ready to support action but is short on the leadership that can prompt it.

In a clue to his instinctive understanding of poverty, Edwards' summary of first principles includes the central concept (I first heard it from Hubert Humphrey on the subject of civil rights some 40 years ago) that confronting poverty is not something "we" do for "them."

"This is something we do for us — for all of us. It makes us stronger; it makes us better," he said.

**Thomas Oliphant, *Boston Globe***

**HURRICANE KATRINA** offered poverty a living face. But these faces are not located solely in New Orleans.

While the Bush administration touts economic growth, the latest poverty reports say that there are 1 million more poor people now than there were a year ago. ... Katrina reminds us of what this poverty means.

The poor are disproportionately African-American, Latino and old. They live from check to check, falling back on a frayed safety net that has been further attacked by tax cuts and program eliminations. These are the folks who work for \$5 or \$6 an hour, providing services, like health care, that they cannot afford for their own families. They cobble together economic survival by juggling two or three low-wage jobs, some that offer benefits and some that do not. They are the hard-working folks who must rely on Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps and public assistance.

**Julianne Malveaux**

# Fighting

# World Poverty

## OTHER VOICES

### AT THE UN: Could the leaders of world body eat on \$1 a day?

By E.R. SHIPP

**W**hat Hurricane Katrina wrought along the Gulf Coast, and especially in New Orleans, has given a face to poverty in the United States and has left many of us shocked and distraught — enough to demand that the president, our commander in chief, open his eyes and take charge. He did that this month.



E.R. Shipp

But neither President George W. Bush's speech from New Orleans nor his speech at the United Nations —

one of many that heads of state and heads of government gave at the opening of the General Assembly's annual talkfest — immediately fills the bellies of the world's poorest, who number in the hundreds of millions.

Imagine living in New York without being able to afford even a hot dog, a bagel or a slice of pizza. Of course, there are poor among us who have very limited resources, but even they have access to something more than \$1 per day. Not so in places such as Niger in western Africa, where more than 60% of the population gets by on less than \$1 per day.

Niger is one of the world's 18 poorest countries, collectively home to 460 million souls, where conditions are much worse than they were 15 years ago. Twelve of those 18 countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. And dust-bowl-like Niger is at the bottom.

That reality was lost amid the rounds of receptions and meet-and-greet photo opportunities during the General Assembly's 60th anniversary this month. But the diplomats know —

and we all should know — that there is no way extreme poverty will be anywhere near halved by 2015, the deadline the world's countries via the United Nations set in 2000, at the start of this millennium.

How conveniently they procrastinate and obfuscate.

"There remains an enormous backlog of deprivation," UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in his understated but most diplomatic manner.

**There is no way extreme poverty will be anywhere near halved by 2015, the deadline the world's countries via the United Nations set in 2000.**

I'd like to see him really let off steam.

In fact, the many UN parties should have been catered on \$1 per person. That might make those officials — and us — think of Niger and countries like it. Ghana. Sudan. Uganda. Zimbabwe. Gambia. Senegal. Nigeria. Rwanda. Eritrea. Ethiopia. Cote d'Ivoire. Sierra Leone.

And on and on.

"There can be no safety in looking away or seeking the quiet life by ignoring the hardship and oppression of others," Bush told the United Nations. "To spread the vision of hope, the United States is determined to help nations that are struggling with poverty."

Stirring words, to be sure. Just not the actual goal of cutting extreme poverty in half that was announced in 2000, refined in Monterrey in 2002, and updated in New York earlier this year.

As you have your hot dog or your bagel or your pint or your rare home-

made, sit-down meal, do it in remembrance of those who cannot. Demand that the swells who annually fete their way through the United Nations' end-of-summer ritual do so on less than \$1 per day until they, in the words of Gambia's president, "go beyond com-

mitments and mere words."

Think of Niger. Be angry.

**E.R. SHIPP** is a columnist for the *New York Daily News*. Write to her at the *New York Daily News*, 450 West 33rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10001, or [ershipp2003@hotmail.com](mailto:ershipp2003@hotmail.com).

# For Wolfowitz, Poverty Is the Newest War to Fight

By EDMUND L. ANDREWS  
Published: September 24, 2005

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23 - Three months into his new job as president of the World Bank, Paul D. Wolfowitz caused heartburn this week for some former colleagues in the Bush administration. As finance ministers from around the world began three days of discussions here on Friday, officials closed in on an international agreement to wipe out \$18 billion in debt for some of the world's poorest countries. [Page C6.]

But that agreement came only after Mr. Wolfowitz publicly sided this week with officials from other countries who warned that the United States might back away from the full cost of debt relief for the poorest countries.

The quiet power struggle is part of Mr. Wolfowitz's transformation from an architect of the United States' war in Iraq to a champion for the world's poor.

Mr. Wolfowitz repeatedly called this week for "stronger commitments" by rich countries to reimburse the World Bank for lost loan repayments. He also pointedly suggested that Congress demonstrate American commitment by passing an authorization bill to cover the future costs. "It's not that they aren't sincere," he told a group of reporters. "But time passes, and I think it's very important to keep them accountable."

American officials said that the United States made good on its promises. Hoping to mollify countries like the Netherlands, which was quietly backed by Mr. Wolfowitz, the United States produced a joint letter promising to reimburse the World Bank dollar-for-dollar on all lost repayments.

Since taking over at the World Bank, Mr. Wolfowitz has called on rich countries to provide more foreign aid. He has cultivated ties with antipoverty groups like Oxfam International and Data, the advocacy group founded by Bono, the rock star.

He has placed a new priority on Africa, but he also talks about goals like expanding opportunities for women, fighting corruption and improving governance in poor countries.

"It's not just about inputs of capital and labor," he said. "It's about a whole range of factors, and many are not traditional economic ones."

Not surprisingly, Mr. Wolfowitz has gone out of his way to reassure political leaders and antipoverty advocates who expressed concern that he would turn the World Bank into a tool of American ideology.

Some longtime campaigners against global poverty, often sharp critics of American policy, say their first impression has been good.

"It appears that he is committed to health and education, which are nearly all of the millennium development goals," said Max Lawson, policy adviser to Oxfam International, referring to goals on poverty reduction and education spelled out by members of the United Nations. "We'll be watching him very closely over the next few months to see whether he follows up on that."

But some experts said they were worried that Mr. Wolfowitz might prove too ambitious. If there is a link between his role in the Iraq war and his role at the World Bank, they caution, it may be in his fervent belief in the ability to impose democracy on countries from the outside.

"The idea that you can spread democracy by either military intervention or through the World Bank is folly, pure folly," said William Easterly, a former director of research at the World Bank and a critic of the bank's policy failures.

"What I'm afraid of is that the World Bank will have more of what it already suffers from, which is mission creep - getting involved in sweeping international causes that sound good without any evidence to show they can be accomplished."

Mr. Wolfowitz has not forgotten about Iraq. Earlier this week, he confirmed a report in The Washington Post that he was considering sending World Bank staff members into Baghdad for the first time in two years. The bank has pledged about \$500 million in aid to Iraq, but withdrew its people after insurgents blew up the United Nation's mission there and killed its top envoy. Still, Mr. Wolfowitz, the former deputy secretary of defense, has focused most of his attention elsewhere. He traveled to Africa in the summer, shortly after taking over the bank, and declared that it would be a "special emphasis" for the bank.

Moving cautiously, he has often sounded the same themes as his predecessor, James D.

Wolfensohn. Like Mr. Wolfensohn, Mr. Wolfowitz talks about the importance of reducing corruption in poor countries and promoting opportunities for women.

But he has also hinted at a heavier emphasis on new agriculture technology, promoting the idea of a "green revolution" for Africa. And he has hinted at a renewed emphasis on infrastructure like roads, water systems and power plants.

Infrastructure projects are a sensitive issue for the World Bank, which retreated from them after being criticized for financing giant bridges and dams that critics said did little to relieve poverty and damaged the environment.

"We've learned a lot from our past mistakes," Mr. Wolfowitz acknowledged this week. But, he said, entrepreneurs and farmers could not begin to realize their potential if they lacked electricity, clean water or roads to move their products to market.

The World Bank makes \$18 billion to \$20 billion in loans and grants a year to low-income countries. But its finances depend on loan repayments and fresh donations from wealthy nations. For all its size, its scale is small in comparison with the private investment that flows through Latin America and Asia.

"I don't hear any new vision yet," said Nancy Birdsall, founder of the Center on Global Development, a nonpartisan research organization here. "The big issues are not about internal management but about what the role of the World Bank is going to be in the 21st century. Right now, the bank's products are still 1960's-style products - loans to governments, infrastructure loans."

Few people would argue that Mr. Wolfowitz, a former dean of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is short on ideas.

But supporters of increased aid to poor countries, including those who adamantly opposed Mr. Wolfowitz's role in invading Iraq, said this week that his vision for the future might be less important right now than his close relationship to President Bush.

## LETTERS

The Ann Arbor News

Sunday, September 25, 2005

### **Work to ease poverty in our own backyards**

The recent pictures of George W. Bush addressing the nation depict a beautiful, serene setting of Jackson Square in New Orleans.

How far from the truth can this be? We are all aware of the devastation, toxic waste, disease and trauma the states Hurricane Katrina bombarded are suffering from. They predicted at least a 40-day cleanup process and now people are expected to come "home" and live with even less than what they use to have. Sure, the world is coming to their aid now, but what happens a few months from now when those resources are depleted and a new murder or crime makes front pages? Bush never said that he'll end the war or that he'll make sure jobs are created and kept here. He never said how we will find so many missing people and how to comfort those who are traumatized by their losses. Yes, you can build it and they will come, but how will they buy what they need without well-paying jobs or any money in their pockets? When thousands more become sick and are dying from the conditions that were not thoroughly cleaned, including finding safe water, what will the "government" say? We have been so focused on the survivors of Katrina we neglect to look in our own backyard. The column that Jo Mathis wrote a few days ago in The News reiterated my beliefs. There is poverty in every city that has passed onto generations. If we look in our own city there are people we can reach out to through donations, volunteering, being on a task force and creating resources. We all know "every little bit counts." What can you do?

Linda M. Rama, Ann Arbor

Letters for September 26

The Grand Rapids Press

## On the dole?

I am writing in response to a curious comment by Cutlerville minister and U.S. Senate candidate Jerry Zandstra ("They Said It," Press, Sept. 18). His quote was "We left people on the dole for years, so when a natural disaster like this happens, and they go out and act like criminals, is that a surprise?"

I find it off that he believes that people who receive help from the federal government are "on the dole." Does that explain why help from the federal government was so slow in reaching Hurricane Katrina victims, because some people in Washington, who perhaps think like Jerry Zandstra, were afraid that such help would place victims "on the dole"?

And is it really being "on the dole" that makes people loot? Did Ken Lay loot Enron because he was "on the dole"? And what does it mean to be "on the dole"? Is it getting help from taxpayers? So, when George W. Bush was part-owner of the Texas Rangers and taxpayers paid for a new stadium for his team, was Mr. Bush "on the dole"? Should the Secret Service keep a close eye on Mr. Bush, not because he occupies the White House, but because he might turn to crime, since he was once "on the dole"?

I don't mean to have fun at Jerry Zandstra's expense. I am writing in the hope that he will rethink his position and his use of terms. After all, Jesus didn't say "Blessed are those who are on the dole," he said "Blessed are the poor."

And Jesus told us to care "for the least of these" among us, which our federal government sometimes does by helping the poor. Some would say it is action like that which demonstrates we are "One nation under God."

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# Poverty issue unveiled?

FLINT JOURNAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CLIO

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Monday, September 26, 2005

JOURNAL READER

I cannot believe how stupid we have become in this country. It took pictures on TV of the hurricane for us to figure out that there is a poverty issue at hand.

If poor folks ever united for a common cause against the powers that restrict them, the upper class would have a major problem on its hands.

But if these poor folks hate each other for reasons that do or don't make sense, as it has been in this country and others for hundreds of years, then there is no true threat.

It's like the Indian wars back in the day. There were enough Indians and tribes to push the white man right off this continent forever - if they would have just united.

But they allowed their enemies to create and reinforce rifts that would not allow this to happen.

Brian J. Krapohl

Clio